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Turner Accused of Slanting Reports to Fit Carter Policy

New York Times News Service

CIA Director Stansfield Turner is being accused in the intelligence community of distorting estimates to make them dovetail with the Carter administration's foreign policy. He denies the allegations, saying that he has no policymaking role but that "it is mandatory that I present good estimates."

The estimates cover long-range prognoses on such issues as Soviet military capabilities, the balance of forces on the Korean Peninsula, Soviet strategic intentions in the Indian Ocean and the outlook for energy production worldwide, particularly in the Soviet Union. Often they form a basis for far-reaching policy decisions by the president on foreign relations and defense priorities.

One of Turner's critics, an official in the intelligence community, said,

"Turner has been highly dissatisfied with a large number of national intelligence estimates, and he has been more demanding and more preemptive than any director of central intelligence in recent times."

Some critics say that redrafted estimates of Soviet intentions ordered by Turner end up with a predictable bias toward gloom.

In an interview, Turner acknowledged that he had heavily involved himself in the production of the so-called national intelligence estimates — considered the most important product of the American intelligence community — as well as in lesser estimate and analysis functions.

However, he maintained that he had neither distorted estimates nor manipulated them to serve White House policy goals.